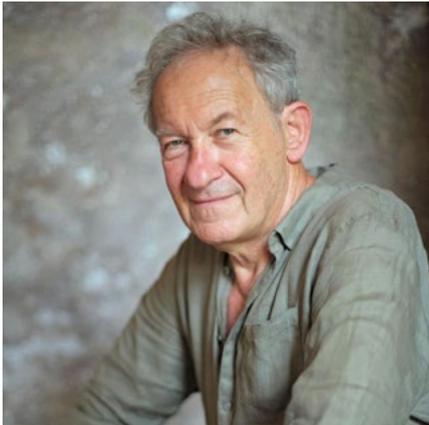


**BBC ARTS' CULTURE IN QUARANTINE:  
YOUNG REMBRANDT WITH SIMON SCHAMA**  
TUESDAY 28 APRIL 2020, 19:30, BBC FOUR

---



Professor Sir Simon Schama CBE

The Ashmolean's *Young Rembrandt* exhibition will be the subject of a new 30-minute BBC Arts film on BBC Four, written and narrated by Professor Sir Simon Schama CBE. The critically acclaimed exhibition, more than ten years in the making, was open to the public for less than three weeks before the coronavirus shut-down. It will now be available to see at home as part of BBC Arts' [Culture in Quarantine](#) initiative which is maintaining public access to arts and culture during the lockdown. *Young Rembrandt* will be broadcast in the *Museums in Quarantine* series at 19:30 on Tuesday 28 April and available on demand on [BBC iPlayer](#).

Made by [Swan Films Ltd](#), the programme was filmed in just one day with minimal crew and equipment to ensure social distancing. The script was written and recorded remotely in New York by world renowned historian and Rembrandt expert, **Simon Schama**. **He says:** 'I was lucky to see *Young Rembrandt* at the Ashmolean just before it was forced to close and I'm delighted to have the chance to bring the exhibition to people's homes during lockdown. Rembrandt is loved, generation after generation, for his capacity to depict the whole of humanity with the keenest and kindest of eyes. We look to him for empathy, understanding and pure joy at his astonishing abilities. Right now we could all do with a bit of Rembrandt.'

**Dr Xa Sturgis, Director the Ashmolean, says:** 'We are hugely grateful to BBC Arts, Swan Films and Professor Schama for making *Young Rembrandt* accessible to people when they can't visit the Ashmolean. It was immensely sad that we had to close our doors so soon after the exhibition started, all the more so when people are in need of the things art and museums can offer.'

**An Van Camp, Curator of the exhibition, says:** 'I am so pleased that while the galleries are dark and people are unable to visit, it will be possible to see *Young Rembrandt* online and in this film. The exhibition is the culmination of more than a decade of work, begun by Professor Christopher Brown CBE, Director Emeritus of the Ashmolean. It is the largest exhibition ever devoted to Rembrandt's early career which includes not only the Ashmolean's own works but many spectacular international loans. It's a story of hard work, perseverance and, ultimately, triumph - which should bring hope and entertainment just when we need it.'

**Neil Crombie, Creative Director of Swan Films, says:** 'At times like this we value great art like Rembrandt's more than ever, so it's been a great privilege to work with the Ashmolean, with BBC Arts and with Simon Schama, under very challenging circumstances, to help give audiences at least a flavour of this moving and beautiful exhibition.'

**Jonty Claypole, Director of BBC Arts, says:** 'The role of the BBC at this time is to keep public access to art and culture as great as ever, and to do so in a way that supports artists and arts organisations. This is more essential than ever because of the proven positive impact that the arts and creativity have on our mental health. I am delighted to give our audiences access to the *Young Rembrandt* exhibition at the Ashmolean in Oxford, and thank the museum, the team at Swan Films and Simon Schama for making it possible.'



Self-Portrait  
1629  
Oil on oak panel, 15.5 x 12.7 cm  
Alte Pinakothek, Munich

**Young Rembrandt online:** to coincide with the BBC Arts film, the Ashmolean will make much of the exhibition available to see [online](#). Along with many of the works in the show and gallery texts explaining the pictures and the story, the Museum has produced new short films with Exhibition Curator An Van Camp.

**Revised exhibition schedule:** we are currently making plans for when we can reopen the Museum following government advice, and we are working to reschedule the temporary exhibitions programme. We hope to show *Young Rembrandt* beyond its original closing date (7 June 2020) and we are liaising, to this end, with the institutional and private lenders who have generously lent works to the exhibition. An updated schedule and revised Rembrandt dates will be announced online as soon as possible.

**About the exhibition:** *Young Rembrandt* is the first major exhibition in the UK to examine the early years of one of the greatest artists of all time. Looking at Rembrandt's first decade at work, from 1624-34, the show charts a career on a truly meteoric path. How was it that in his earliest known work, *The Spectacles Seller* (1624-25), we find a crude, garishly coloured painting by an artist struggling with his medium; but a mere six years later he had completed an acknowledged masterpiece - *Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem* (1630)? The exhibition is the largest collection of works devoted to the young Rembrandt to date, featuring 31 paintings by Rembrandt, 13 by his most important contemporaries, and a further 90 drawings and prints from international and private collections. Read the press release at [www.ashmolean.org/press](http://www.ashmolean.org/press)

ENDS

▪ **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Claire Parris, Press Officer, [claire.parris@ashmus.ox.ac.uk](mailto:claire.parris@ashmus.ox.ac.uk), 07833 384 512

▪ **PRESS IMAGES**

Images for editorial use are available to download at <http://bit.ly/youngrembrandt>

▪ **NOTES TO EDITORS**

Exhibition: *Young Rembrandt*

Dates: The exhibition opened on 27 February 2020; closing date to be confirmed.

▪ **CULTURE IN QUARANTINE**

BBC Arts' Culture in Quarantine initiative is an essential arts and culture service across BBC platforms that will keep the arts alive in people's homes, focused most intensely across BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4, BBC Two, BBC Four, BBC Sounds, BBC iPlayer and [www.bbc.co.uk/bbcarts](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcarts). We are doing this in close consultation and collaboration with organisations like Arts Council England and other national funding and producing bodies.

This arts and culture service includes:

- Guides and access to shuttered exhibitions, performances or permanent collections in museums, galleries and performance spaces
- Ways to experience books with privileged access to authors including a collaboration with the Big Book Weekend amongst other initiatives.
- Jewels from the archive as well as brand new content ensuring that new theatre and dance performances will join with modern classics to create a repertory theatre of broadcast.
- Participatory offers including masterclasses and ways to enable audiences to create at home through Get Creative
- Topical arts through Front Row, Front Row Late, Free Thinking and more
- A fund with Arts Council England to support around 25 artists to create new work
- A place for arts organisations to share innovations from quarantine and for audiences to discover new things through [www.bbc.co.uk/bbcarts](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcarts).

